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Daily Review of the Syrian Press

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No. 79

(FOR STAFF USE)

~~Thursday~~
~~Friday~~ April 27

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Papers Reviewed:

Alif Da', Al Nasr, Al Manar, Al Fayha', Al Ba'th, Al Salad, Barada, Al Kifah, Al Masa', Al Qabas, Al Ayyam, Al Insha', Al 'Alam, Al Hadara, Al Nidal, Al Shabab, Al Nazir, Al-Islah, Al Suri, and Al Jabal.

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DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

MINISTER DAWALIBI:

Barada: When asked to comment on a declaration made recently by Dr. Sami Kabbara, the Minister of Interior, Dr. Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi, the Minister of National Economy, made the following declaration:

"The declaration I made in Egypt was clearly a reply to the pressure which attempted to induce Syria to surrender to Jewish policy. It is this Jewish policy which has so far resulted in exterminating the Arabs in Palestine and depriving them of their property and in engraving on the entrance of the Jewish Parliament in Tel-Aviv a sentence indicating that the frontiers of Israel extend from the Nile to the Euphrates. Every pressure designed to induce us to surrender to world Jewry, whose activity, as we all know, has resulted in the extermination of the Arabs in Palestine, implies an attempt to exterminate the Arabs from

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the Nile...

(Pr.Dig. 79/2)

the Nile to the Euphrates. We are told that the repulsion of the communist threat to Syria justifies the necessity of subjecting us to Jewish influence. As a result of the pressure exerted on us, we are now facing two alternatives. We have either to acquiesce in the extermination of the Arabs by the Jews for the purpose of repulsing Russian threat to the Arabs, or to accept Russian danger in opposition to American policy. Under such circumstances a plebiscite should be held. As it is, the plebiscite has already been held, and the declaration I made in Cairo has been favorably received by the entire Arab people.

"When I made my declaration, I did not speak on behalf of the Government, but in my capacity as a member of the people. The people have unanimously supported my declaration. I do not think that a government, desiring to reflect the wishes of its people, can express a view different from that of the people."

Referring to Sami Kabbarah's declaration, Minister Dawalibi doubted the truth of the statement attributed to Kabbara that the Government did not share his views. In this connection he said: "I have not officially submitted my declaration to the Government nor has the Government expressed its views. I have made all my declarations in my personal capacity. I have invited the people to express their views in a plebiscite and the people have responded to my invitation. The dilemma has been solved.

Minister Dawalibi added: "I have not defended Russia's policy. Consequently I should not have been reminded that Russia supported the Jews against the Arabs in Palestine. I have simply explained the situation. If we have suffered from the American policy which aims at subjecting the Arabs to Jewish influence, this does not mean that we should be induced to become the victims of a war between Russia and America. I have expressed my views frankly. Our people believe in their existence and they will never accept, however weak their material forces are, to surrender to any big power. They will surrender only to the dictates of their country's interests."

Al Masa': Contrary to all the current reports that the American Minister in Damascus protested to the Syrian Government in connection with the bombing of his Legation, the Eastern News Agency is in a position to state that Mr. James Keeley expressed his appreciation to the Syrian Government for having given the incident its full attention.

Al Balad: Premier 'Azm received at the Foreign Office yesterday morning (April 26) Minister Dawalibi who showed signs of anxiety when entering 'Azm's office. The meeting lasted one hour during which all the morning papers which published Dr. Kabbarah's declaration were exhibited.

(Pr.Dig. 79/3)

Al Nasr and Al Manar: Asked for confirmation of his statement published in the morning papers of April 26 concerning his opinion on Dr. Dawalibi's declarations, Minister Kabbarah stated: "My comment on Dr. Dawalibi's declarations was not for publication but was rather a lobby talk with some friends. Furthermore, I was misquoted. All that I said was that: "Dr. Dawalibi's declarations are purely personal. Russia as well as America encouraged Jewish aggression and supported partition."

Al Manar: Dr. Kabbarah added to his aforementioned statement that harmony between all the Ministers prevails and notably between his colleague Dr. Dawalibi and himself.

Al Fayha: The Minister of Agriculture, 'Abd-al-Baqi Nizam al-Din stated yesterday that he had not heard that the American Minister had presented a protest or that America interceded with a certain personality to express its disapproval of Dr. Dawalibi's declarations.

Al Balad and Al Fayha urged today that cabinet ministers be more reserved in giving random statements which may affect Syria's good relations with friendly countries. Al Fayha blamed Premier 'Azm for having kept silent vis-a-vis his ministers' declarations.

SEPIOUS DEVELOPMENTS

Al-Fayha describes the contradictory declarations recently made by certain Ministers and the lack of harmony in the Government as serious and unprecedented developments which are apt to make the people lose respect for and confidence in the Government.

The paper remarks: "Dr. Dawalibi made his famous declaration to which Minister Asyun replied on the next day. Later Dr. Sami Kabbara replied to this declaration, and very recently the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Abd al-Baqi Nizam al-Din, commented on it. Minister Dawalibi will shortly reply to the declaration of the Minister of Agriculture, seeing that he thinks that his power is such as would enable him to attack the United States and President Truman."

The paper regrets that the Prime Minister has not attempted either openly or in secret to create harmony in his cabinet or to prevent his Ministers from attacking one another.

Al-Balad observes that Syrian statesmen believe that it is not advisable at present to make official declarations on subjects which might thrust the country into the scene of international conflict between the Eastern and Western blocs. They also believe that it would be more beneficial, were the Government to direct its attention to internal problems and to secure the stability which the country

(Pr. Dig. 79/4)

The paper adds that although it is known that each of the three big powers has had its share in the responsibility for the Arabs' defeat in Palestine, nevertheless, the country is not at present in a position to allow such political declarations to disturb the smoothness of our relations with friendly states.

The paper concludes by urging the Ministers to be more cautious and far-sighted in their conduct and declarations concerning foreign relations.

Barada inquires about the motives which induced Minister Sami Kabbara to refute Dawalibi's declaration or to encroach on the Prime Minister's right by speaking on behalf of the Government. The Prime Minister has already declared that Minister Dawalibi made his declaration in his personal capacity and that he reflected the feeling of public opinion in its present state of unrest. Furthermore, why did not Dr. Sami Kabbara make his refutation directly after Minister Dawalibi's declaration was published? It seems that the two states which have felt the impact of Dawalibi's declaration have recently remembered that they have certain friends who can refute or condemn Dawalibi's statements. Consequently, these friends, late though it may be, have pronounced their views in the most tactless manner.

Dawalibi's statements are not inconsistent with facts, as Dr. Kabbara thinks. The Soviet Union has not, as America, supplied Israel with arms, nor did it exert pressure on other states to vote for the Partition Plan, nor did it recognize Israel two minutes after it was declared a state. The Soviet Union has never exerted pressure on the Arab states and the Arab League in the interest of Israel, nor did its representatives knock at the doors of the Cairo hotels to warn the Arab delegates not to lay obstacles in the way of a peace treaty with Israel and to ask them to retain Jordan in the Arab League. Furthermore, the Soviet Minister did not call on Premier 'Azm to inform him that his Government would consider the closing of Syro-Jordanian frontiers, in case Jordan concluded a peace treaty with Israel, as an intervention in the affairs of another state.

It is true that the Soviet Union voted for the Partition Plan and sympathized with the Jews, as many other states did. Can the Arabs, however, cite an example in which they made a move or uttered a word in favor of the Soviet Government? The Soviet Union, for its part, exercised its right of veto in support of Syria and Lebanon when they were asking for their independence and the evacuation of foreign armies from their territory. In all international organizations, the Soviet Union has usually adopted a favorable attitude towards the Arabs. When the question of Libya was debated by the United Nations the Soviet Union supported the independence and unity of the country and the evacuation of foreign armies within a period of three months. At that time the Soviet delegate deeply regretted the fact that certain Arab states supported the Anglo-American policy of opposing the independence of Libya and the

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evacuation of foreign armies until after 1952.

The Arab delegations to the United Nations have always sided with Britain and America even in questions which did not at all interest the Arabs. Should we not, therefore, expect the Soviet delegates to despise the Arab delegates, to consider them as Anglo-American officials, to consider their countries as Anglo-American colonies and to prefer the Jews to them, since the Jews act solely in accordance with their own interests.

We, as Arab nationals, consider communism as a threat to the Arab countries, and we struggle against any foreign state which has designs on us, but when we realize that Britain and America are upholding the Zionists in an attempt to expatriate us from our countries in favor of the Jews, we shall ally ourselves with the Soviet Union or even become a Soviet republic, if such a course would save us from becoming victims of Zionism.

Al-Isslah observes that Dawalibi has cleverly propagandized for his famous declaration, especially in connection with the recent report that President Truman has requested King 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Saud to use his good offices to remove Dawalibi from the scene of Syrian politics. The paper fears that Dawalibi has raised this subject for the purpose of confirming himself in his post by making people believe that Syria is not influenced by America.

DETAINEES ON CHARGE OF BOMB INCIDENT

Alif Ba': ANA reports that the three-day hunger strike launched by communist detainees charged with involvement in the bombing of the American Legation, Damascus, has ended.

It is worth noting that the Minister of Interior has not been informed of the hunger strike and that contrary to press reports he had not instructed the Directorate of Prisons to report to him on any incident which might take place in Syrian prisons.

Al 'Alam reports that the prisoners agreed to end the strike when Minister Kabbara promised to hasten inquiries.

IRAQI DEBT TO SYRIA

Al Masa': The Ministry of Finance has demanded the Iraqi Government to pay for the wheat which it had purchased from Syria and which it had promised to pay in installments.

DR. CARLETON'S ARTICLES

Al Nazir of Aleppo today published the first of a series of articles written by Dr. Carleton, Dean of the Aleppo College, and addressed to his American friends. In his first article, Dr. Carleton spoke about the factors which led to the collapse of Za'im's regime.

ARAB AFFAIRS

ANNEXATION OF JORDAN

Al Nazir: The Populist organ today advised the Arab Governments not to expel Jordan from the League because of its annexation of the Arab sector of Palestine. It pointed out that such action by the League would force Jordan to surrender to Israel and sign a peace treaty with it. The paper concluded that Syria should remain calm and face the crisis with wisdom.

EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER THREATENS

Al Manar reproduced today from the Egyptian weekly Akhir Lahzah a statement attributed to the Egyptian Foreign Minister in which he said that he was about to deliver a statement similar to that of Dr. Dawalibi.

ACHESON SUPPORTS ANNEXATION

Alif Ba', Washington 26 - Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated to the press that the United States Government is studying Jordan's decision to annex Eastern Palestine in the light of the status of the Palestine question in the United Nations and the relation of the United States to this organization.

When asked to comment, the Secretary of State stated, "The policy of the United States is usually not to oppose the union of two nations of similar character".

BOYCOTT OF US COMPANIES

Al Nasr: According to Al 'Asas, Egyptian daily, the Political Committee of the Arab League has taken a secret decision concerning measures to be taken against American companies who have established branches in Israel. Foremost among these are the Ford Motor Company and Kaiser-Frazer.

In case of failure to persuade these companies to refrain from cooperating with Israel, the Arab countries will, in accordance with the AL resolution, boycott these companies.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

COMPLAINTS AGAINST TAPLINE

Al 'Alam: A large number of inhabitants of Jawlan crowded in front of the Government building to protest against TAPline for employing foreign workers.

PREMIER'S REPLY TO TEN QUESTIONS

Alif Ba': The Editor-in-chief of Le Commerce du Levant addressed ten questions to the Syrian Prime Minister, Azm, whose

replies.....

replies are as follows:

1. 44 million Syrian pounds

Contrary to press reports Syria has not replied to the Lebanese note concerning the 44 million Syrian pounds. The question is still under consideration by the Council of Ministers.

2. Economic Separation

I have stated and reiterate that separation was inevitable. This does not prevent us from concluding a commercial agreement for the exchange of goods on a barter basis. The important goods should be 100% Lebanese products.

3. Syrian Customs Policy

Our customs policy is based on (1) the protection of domestic production, and (2) on the restriction of imports. We separated from Lebanon because it did not realize the importance of the principles of the Havana Agreement which are fundamental as far as we are concerned.

4. Violation of July 8, 1949 Agreement

Despite its consent to the principles of economic unity with Syria, Lebanon failed to implement certain measures. It reasoned, in a note to the Syrian Government, that its right to act as a commercial agent for our imports was an established right. This we reject, as we want to import directly our needs.

5. Monetary Policy and February 1949 Agreement

Our monetary policy is clear as explained in the Monetary Law. The February 1949 Agreement was not implemented in view of the existence of the economic unity between the two countries although the implementation of this would have helped us enjoy our monetary and economic independence.

6. Revision of TAPline Agreement

The Government has not resorted to this action. The Company has begun laying its pipelines.

7. Diversion of Haifa pipelines

The Government has not been officially informed of any diversion of the Haifa pipelines.

8. Trade Agreement and Import Res-
trictions.

8. Trade Agreement and Import Restrictions

We prefer to remain in disagreement with a country which desires to increase its exports to us rather than follow a policy which would result in the unrestricted inflow of foreign goods into our markets.

An agreement with the Soviet Union would be based on the aforementioned principles. There have, however, been no talks in this respect.

9. Implementation of Art. 7 & 8 of Collective Security Pact

A special committee will consider the implementation of Article 8 of the Collective Security Pact. As to the free exchange of domestic goods between the Arab League member countries, this is a difficult issue in view of the fact that the production of each country is confined to agricultural products. I, therefore, believe that each will have to export to the country from which it can import the materials and products which it needs.

I do not think that the aforementioned policy is contrary to the policy of cooperation between the Arab countries.

10. Financing of Railway Enterprises

The most important project under consideration is the extension of railway lines between Baghdad - Deir-ez-zor - Aleppo - Latakia. The financing of this project is a secret which must be kept.
